

THE LAKE MEDITATION

Research indicates that meditation exercises reduce feelings of stress, and can help us to relax.

The lake meditation is one practice that is used to ground us in the present, and renew a sense of peace.

Instructions

1. Imagine you are sitting on an outcrop of rock looking across at a beautiful, still lake. The colour of the lake is deep turquoise. All around the lake there are tall jagged mountains with patches of snow at the highest elevations.

2. You focus your attention directly on the lake. The water is calm, and you can see the sharp reflection of the mountains and the trees in the motionless water.

Occasionally a bird drops down into the scene ... and then you spot another ... and another one. The birds dive up to the sky, flying higher and higher, until they are just dots which disappear from your sight.

You focus on the sky; it is a rich blue cloudless sky; and you can trace a white pattern where a plane has flown over.

You feel the sun on your face and the heat upon your body. You feel relaxed and sleepy, and totally at peace.

You drop your gaze to the lake, and to the large grey rocks that are heaped around the edges in uneven piles. You can see that there is moss on a few of the rocks – and occasionally a marmot appears and disappears.

3. Suddenly you're conscious of a change in the air. A cold wind has blown in, and is gathering in strength. You notice that the sky behind you has turned leaden. You can see the trees are bending with the force of the wind. Now you feel some heavy raindrops falling on your head and legs. Also, you notice that the surface tension on the lake's disturbed. There are waves on the water - where before it had been still.

Yet, it appears that the depths of the lake are undisturbed. The water makes no sound and the lake is still contained. Also, the mountains are still standing – despite the building storm. There is still a sense of peace and stability here.

4. Apply this meditation to the storms you face in life. Even when things are erupting and are threatening and angry, deep inside there is a calm you can access when you choose. That is, you know you can withdraw and can practice mindfulness.

